The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Affectation is the product of falsehood.—Carlyle.

WHOLE NO. 1052. WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 1931 FRANK MORRISON, Secretary VOL. 21, NO. 13.

CAPITALISM ON TRIAL, SAYS LAWMAKER FISH

New York, June 6.—"Our industrial capitalism must clean house or be compelled by public opinion to change into a socialized capitalism," said Congressman Fish, chairman of the House Committee Investigating Communism, in a radio address over station WJSV. He favored the five-day week and the six-hour day and old age pensions.

"Capitalism must divest itself of some of its manifestations of greed and avarice if it is to maintain its present status," said Mr. Fish.

"If communism is on trial, so also is capitalism," he said. "Grave abuses have crept into our industrial capitalism, such as child labor, long hours particularly in the industrial sections of the South, huge bonuses to executives and the throwing out on the industrial scrap heap of employes at 40 years of age.

"Our capitalists, industrialists and bankers for the past 18 months have been providing large credits to Soviet Russia and are ruining our foreign markets.

"During this period of unemployment I advocate as a temporary solution the five-day week and the six-hour day."

Mr. Fish called for old-age pension laws and proper retirement provision for all government and private employes. He predicted that Congress will raise the rate on unearned incomes and on inheritance taxes, with a strict tax on gifts that are intended to evade inheritance legislation.

TREASURY SELLS BONDS TO MEET HUGE DEFICIT

Washington, June 6.—A billion-dollar deficit in the national treasury will be partly met by the issuance of $800,000,000 bonds bearing 3½ per cent. The bonds will mature in 1949, but can be called three years earlier. These bonds will be taken over by large banks, whose strong boxes are filled with idle money.

The tax question will probably be a major issue in the next Congress, when higher income taxes and inheritance taxes will be urged. Secretary of the Treasury Mellon favors "widening the base" of tax assessments. This means that people now exempt will be included in income tax payments.

Real estate owners object to present high levies on land, while their holdings are decreasing in value. Mark Graves, New York tax commissioner, made this significant statement at the recent meeting of real estate boards in Baltimore:

"If it is desired to relieve real estate from some of the tax load it now carries, the increase in the tax is worthy of consideration. This is the one tax which cannot be passed on. Of all our taxes it imposes the least hardship upon society and business."

CASH RESOURCES UP FOR MANY CONCERNS

New York, June 6.—Business men talk of deflation, but 150 leading corporations ended last year with cash and its equivalent in an amount nearly as large as the prosperous year of 1929.

Tabulations by Dow-Jones show that these companies in 1930 had $2,-966,859,992 in their strong boxes, as compared with $2,968,082,925 at the close of 1929. This is a decrease of but 1 per cent.

Cash gains by some of the larger corporations was sensational. General Motors advanced, in round numbers, from $127,000,000 to $186,000,-000. The American Rolling mill jumped from $2,000,000 to $6,000,000, Pullman, Inc., from $65,000,000 to $68,000,000, General Electric from $123,000,000 to $141,000,000.

WISCONSIN PASSES OLD AGE PENSION

Madison, Wis., June 6.—Compulsory county old age pensions, after July 1, 1933, as approved by the House, was passed by the Senate.

The bill transfers administration of old age pensions from the State Board of Control to county courts and requires every Wisconsin county to come under the old age pension law. The 1933 legislature shall set up sufficient funds to provide state aid for counties in carrying out old age relief. Counties, however, are empowered to levy taxes for this purpose.

PENNSYLVANIA PASSES EQUITY REGULATION

Harrisburg, Pa., June 6.—The Senate passed the House injunction-regulation bill which provides for compulsory jury trial in contempt cases growing out of alleged violation of a labor injunction. The judge who issued the order will retire from the case.

Courts are prohibited from issuing preliminary orders except after hearing both sides in open court. These writs are limited to five days.

STOCK IS WATERED BY PUBLIC UTILITY

Washington, June 6.—More than $21,000,000 was improperly included as fixed capital on the books of the Mississippi River Power Company, reports a Federal Trade Commission accountant.

The $21,000,000 was classified as discounts, common stock bonus and commissions.

INTEREST ON MONEY CAN'T BE CALLED "WAGES"

An eastern financial journal explains that if bankers could put wages up or down at will they would not permit the reduction of "wages" of money. The "wages" of money (interest) has been reduced.

Here is the theory that labor is a commodity; that a human being, endowed with memory, understanding and will, should be classed with a medium of exchange.

To say that interest on money is "wages," or what the worker receives as his portion of production, is the last word in dead-wood economy.

If a banker is compelled to reduce interest charges—his alleged money "wage"—is his living standard affected? Must his children be taken out of school? Are they undernourished to the extent of his "wage" cut?

Suppose a business man asks for a loan of $100 000 and the banker tells him his labor costs are too high. What happens?

The business man is forced to reduce wages—to lower living standards of his employes—that the banker may receive a higher interest rate.

To say that bankers can not reduce workers' wages is to ignore realities.

Bankers hold the key to the industrial situation because they control the Nation's credit. It is significant that influential industrialists oppose wage cuts, but not one banker of standing has taken this position.

They either openly favor reductions or reach the cause against this iniquitous principle," as does the president of the American Bankers' Association.

Money rates respond to competition. In the scramble for money to play the stock market two years ago, call money charges soared to 20 per cent and more.

Shall it be said that this situation, due to a frenzied gambling mania, must apply to human beings?

Shall the methods of money changers and stock market riggers be the rule when human beings are involved?

Shall living standards be debased by competition between employed and the millions of workless?

Shall the depression be continued in intensified form by decreasing purchasing power of the people that bankers may be assured higher rates of interest?

OFFICIALS VIOLATE THEIR OATH WHEN THEY REFUSE FREE SPEECH

—GOVERNOR PINCHOT of Pennsylvania.

Harrisburg, Pa., June 6.—Governor Pinchot has written a scathing letter to Elwood K. Bean, burgess of Lansdale, this State, who refused to permit the Hosiery Workers' Union to meet in that borough.

The governor called on the town executive to permit the workers to exercise their American right of free speech and to provide adequate police protection.

"If the Constitution of the State and the Nation mean what they say, then free speech is a fundamental right of every American citizen, and the denial of free speech is unlawful" said Governor Pinchot.

"Both you and I are sworn to uphold the Constitution and the laws of the United States and this Commonwealth. I call your attention pointedly to this fact, and to the very fact that obedience to the Constitution is the duty of every American citizen, including yourself.

"Entirely apart from the constitutional right of free speech, it has been demonstrated times beyond number that the policy of denying this right is dangerous and ineffective and has the direct result of advancing instead of repressing the cause against which the denial is made. The surest way to spread any doctrine or to disseminate any set opinions is to forbid people to mention them in public. Even savages, who perpetuate the names of their chiefs by forbidding the speaking of their names, have learned this fact.

"Local police officers are properly charged with the duty of maintaining order within their jurisdictions. The just purpose of ordinances governing disorderly conduct and other similar offenses is most certainly not, however, to enable local officials to exercise a censorship over the kind of orderly public meetings which can or can not be held.

"To prevent meetings held in support of the right of labor to organize is to deny a right which the Constitution, the laws and the judicial decisions of Pennsylvania specifically recognize. We have long passed the time when there was any doubt about that."

PRIVATE AID FAILS; PUBLIC FUNDS LEAD

New York, June 6.—The alleged effectiveness of private relief during the business depression is not sustained, according to Ralph G. Hurlin, director of the division of statistics, Russell Sage Foundation.

In an address to the American Statistical Association, Mr. Hurlin said that during the first three months of this year $10,-000,000 a month was spent for relief in 75 cities. Public agencies provided 71 per cent and private agencies 21 per cent of the balance came from mothers' relief and old age pensions.

Old age relief is destined to become a larger factor in this country, said Mr. Hurlin.

TRAINMEN LIMIT HOURS TO ASSIST UNEMPLOYED

Houston, Texas, June 6.—The Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, at their convention here, voted to limit the work day of members as a means of relieving unemployed. More than 10,000 trainmen are idle.

Working hours in yard service will be limited to 26 days, or 208 hours, a month; in freight service to 3,500 miles, or its equivalent, and in passenger service to 5,500 miles or its equivalent.

The plan will become effective within 30 days or as soon as the brotherhood's representatives can arrange for the change with railroad managements.

TENURE FOR TEACHERS

Madison, Wis., June 6.—Permanent tenure for teachers of the Milwaukee vocational schools became a fact when Governor La Follette signed the Groves bill. This was one of the most bitterly fought measures of the present legislative session.

By the new law teachers in those schools go on probation for three years. If found satisfactory after that time they can not be removed except upon written complaint and after hearing.

MAY TAX GAS STATIONS

Indianapolis, June 6.—Indiana may extend its chain store tax to gas stations. The State Board of Tax Commissioners will ask the Attorney General to pass on the question.

SPEED-UP SYSTEMS DON'T CREATE WORK

New York, June 6.—"How can more labor be used under a system where one worker finds himself doing twice the amount of work he formerly did?" asks Thomas F. McMahon, editor of the Textile Worker, official magazine United Textile Workers of America.

The labor editor is referring to the American Wool and Cotton Reporter's statement that output has increased 140 to 150 per cent since the last few years and that this will enlarge work opportunities.

Operatives in spinning rooms, this trade paper states, "tend 24 or 30 sides of spinning instead of 10 or 12 sides. The installation of automatic looms and the proper extension of their operation has cut the cost of weaving a full 50 per cent or more. In one New England mill, for instance—and there are hundreds of similar examples throughout the industry—on one style of construction the weaving cost used to be 45 cents a cut and is now 15 cents."

The American Wool and Cotton Reporter shows that this speed-up system and automatic machinery is running through every department of the textile industry.

Instances are cited where a mill can produce in four days the cloth it used ago and value that was produced a few years ago in five and one-half days.

The trade paper concludes: "The whole industry is being overhauled in this way to the advantage of the operatives (workers) because the lower the cost of the goods the greater the volume to be sold, and the larger the number of operatives who can be kept on the payroll."

Editor McMahon calls on the trade paper editor to show how more workers can be employed while speed-ups and automatic machinery is continuous.

ALBERT H. HAWLEY DIES

Cleveland, June 6.—Albert H. Hawley, secretary-treasurer Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineemen since 1909, died at his home in this city, after a long illness. He was born in Davenport, Iowa, in 1866. He worked as a fireman and engineer from 1886 to 1901, when he was appointed inspector for the Interstate Commerce Commission. He served as trustee of the brotherhood from 1895 to 1909, when he was chosen secretary-treasurer.

MOTHERS FORCED TO LABOR BY LOW WAGES OF FATHERS

Washington, June 6.—An increase in the proportion of mothers in Philadelphia working to help support their families was found by the Federal Children's Bureau after a study of 12,000 mothers in 1928.

In contrast to a study made in Philadelphia at the close of the World War, when one out of seven mothers had gone into industry, the latest study showed that one out of five mothers were employed. Twenty-eight per cent of the mothers were the chief breadwinners of the family.

"The proportion of mothers employed varied directly with the number of children and with the presence of children of pre-school age," the report states. "The indications are that mothers of children who require constant supervision and mothers of large families do not go to work except as a last resort. Then they try to obtain work at night or at hours that interfere the least with their duties as mothers.

"Mothers who must earn to keep the family together, however, will work even if the children are neglected. It is often because adequate supervision and food and clothing for the children."

Factory work and domestic service were the principal occupations of the mothers who were the chief or sole breadwinners. There are apparently fewer opportunities now than 10 years ago for gainful work at home.

About half of the mothers who were obliged to supplement the husband's wages were employed in stores, office and other buildings. The fact that this work could be done at night when the father could stay with the children appealed to the mothers. But on the other hand, the low wages paid made it undesirable for the woman who had no other means of support for herself and her family.

GOVERNMENT BY LAW UPHELD

The United States Supreme Court has ruled that equity can not be substituted for law.

The decision annuls a Minnesota statute that empowered equity to padlock any newspaper or publication the judge considered scandalous or defamatory.

The law denies free press, said the court. A person who has a grievance against such publication has redress in the criminal and civil courts of that State.

The decision is a vindication of trade union opposition to the labor injunction that denies free press, free speech and free assemblage.

Labor's position on the injunction is in line with the United States Supreme Court decision—maintenance of government by law.

HOW EQUITY USURPS LAW

A Philadelphia equity judge issued an injunction against striking hosiery workers, but ordered that the writ be operative only where an act is committed that would be unlawful if no strike existed.

In other words, the injunction can not be enforced unless the hosiery workers commit a criminal act.

This judge might be considered a "good" injunction judge, but it must be kept in mind that he retained the power to annul government by law.

This is the essence of trade union opposition to the labor injunction.

When a criminal act is done, law is violated and the statutes make ample provision for trial.

Equity has no jurisdiction in the enforcement of criminal law. That process should only apply where the plaintiff has no remedy at law.

When workers seek higher living standards and are charged with an unlawful act, they are entitled to every right freely accorded the meanest criminal.

If an injunction judge takes jurisdiction, he overthrows the American theory of government and substitutes autocracy.

Whether that autocracy be benevolent or despotic is beside the question.

ARTHUR HUDDELL DEAD; WAS ENGINEERS' HEAD

Washington, June 6.—Arthur M. Huddell, president International Union of Operating Engineers and first vice president Building Trades Department, A. F. of L., died in a local hospital of pneumonia, following a cerebral hemorrhage with which he was stricken in his office May 26.

The collapse was caused by a gunman's attack in a restaurant where Huddell, General Secretary John Poscheil and Frank E. Langdon, editor of the engineers' journal, were seated.

The gunman's bullet, aimed at Huddell, was stopped by a memorandum book in the left-hand pocket of the union's coat. Langdon lost an eye. Several shots were fired at Posseil.

Huddell's narrow escape was treated lightly by him, although the bullet bruised the flesh near the heart. Later, however, he had a cerebral hemorrhage and was removed to the hospital.

His home and relatives are in Chelsea, Mass., where the funeral was held. He was born in Danvers, Mass., in 1869, and joined the Operating Engineers' Union in 1896. He served as first vice president from 1908 to 1919. He assumed the office of president on the death of Milton Snellings at the 1921 Denver convention of the A. F. of L.

TRUST CASE REVIEW IS GRANTED PAINTERS

Washington, June 6.—The United States Supreme Court agreed to review an award by the Illinois Federal Court, northern division, against Chicago Painters' District Council.

The Federal Government brought suit against these workers under the Sherman anti-trust act. They were to handle kitchen cabinets made outside Chicago, and the government claimed this is an interference with interstate commerce.

The union contends interstate commerce is not involved because the essential character of the business ceased upon delivery of the cabinets to the place of installation in Chicago.

LEAST ILLITERACY IS FOUND IN IOWA

Washington, June 6.—Iowa, with an illiterate population of only three-tenths of one per cent, has the least illiteracy among the 33 States for which the 1930 census figures are now available, according to the National Advisory Committee on Illiteracy.

MORE PROPHECY

New York, June 6.—James M. Matthews, economist for a Boston private school of business, predicts a business revival—14 years from now.

He says we'll be sailing along in 1945 in the same way we did in 1918, 1919 and 1920.

Minnesota's "Gag" Law Illegal; Court Makes Historic Decision

Washington, June 6.—A Minnesota law, which empowered equity courts to suppress newspapers in that State, has been set aside by the United States Supreme Court.

Chief Justice Hughes held that the law infringes the liberty of the press guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. Justices Holmes, Brandeis, Stone and Roberts joined in this opinion.

Justice Butler wrote the dissenting opinion, which was supported by Justices Van Deventer, McReynolds and Sutherland. The latter decision declared that the majority decision gives the press a freedom not recognized heretofore and construes the word "liberty" in the Fourteenth Amendment "to put upon the States a Federal restriction that is without precedent."

Chief Justice Hughes and his four associates took their stand for liberty of the press as commonly understood. They insisted that libel laws protect any person who claims to be wronged.

The Minnesota law was passed in 1925. It authorized equity courts to perpetually enjoin any newspaper or other publication that the court believes is malicious, scandalous and defamatory.

"Whatever wrong the appellant has committed, or may commit, by his publications, the State appropriately afford both public and private redress by its libel laws," said Chief Justice Hughes.

"Public officers, whose character and conduct remain open to debate and free discussion in the press, find their remedies for false accusations in actions under libel laws providing for redress and punishment, and not in proceedings to restrain the publication of newspapers and publications."

The minority decision said the newspaper in question was, to use the words of the Minnesota Supreme Court, "devoted largely to malicious, scandalous and defamatory matter." This fact was ignored by the majority justices, who held that the libel and civil action are at the disposal of citizens, rather than undermine a constitutional guarantee.

INDUSTRY INFLATED SKY HIGH; REAL WAGE UP BUT 13 PER CENT

New York, June 6.—Dr. Julius Klein, assistant Secretary of Commerce, in a speech to the Advertising Club of New York, smashed the position of wage deflationists.

Dr. Klein said real wages (buying power) were inflated in the prosperous years of 1928-1929.

"In the period from 1921 to 1929 real wages increased 13 per cent," he said. "The return to industrialists during that same period rose 22 per cent, whereas the gain in dividends on industrials and rails were 256 per cent. There's your inflation as far as the wage earner is concerned. A 13 per cent increase in real wages as contrasted with the rises in returns to industrialists.

"Another angle of the wage reduction question which should be kept in mind," said Dr. Klein, "is the fallacious belief that labor is the major factor in the cost of manufacturing a product. Labor constitutes only 16.2 per cent of factory costs, and a wage cut of 10 per cent, when translated into the final price, would mean only a difference of only 1.6 per cent.

"Truly, this is a microscopic saving!"

WORLD WHEAT CRISIS HARMS U. S. EXPORTS

New York, June 6.—"Unless the Russian experiment collapses the United States is out of the wheat-export business, except in very unusual years or at ruinously low prices," said Senator Capper in the New York Times.

Russia can apparently grow wheat in enormous quantities, is close to water transportation, with low labor costs and this wheat can be dumped into Europe, he says, said Mr. Capper.

"Soviet Russia is the greatest competitor of the American wheat farmer today in the world market. The Russian competition in the world market differs from Canadian, Australian or Argentinian competition. The Russian Soviet has been dumping wheat into Western Europe at whatever price the profit will bring. The Russian representative at the London (wheat) conference, according to the reports we received, carefully preserved that right."

Senator Capper pointed out that exports of this country have changed from foodstuffs to finished manufactures. "There is no market for American wheat in South America, nor in Eastern Europe, nor in Africa, and only a potential market in the Orient," he said. "And when we speak of the world wheat market we mean Western Europe.

"There are just two things the wheat farmer can do, harsh as the doctrine seems. First, he can reduce his wheat production to approximate the domestic demand. Second, he can look forward to a time when, through judicious planning and a long-term program of education, the domestic consumption of wheat can be materially increased. And apparently that time will be slow in coming."

CANADIAN CHOSEN TO HEAD RAIL MEN

Kansas City, Mo., June 6.—The international character of the trade union movement was again shown when the convention of the Order of Railway Conductors, held in this city, elected S. N. Berry of Toronto president.

The new executive was senior vice president and presided at the convention on the death of President Curtis during this convention.

The new Berry was elected president by an overwhelming vote. The temper of the convention was shown by Vice President Phillips, of Terre Haute, one of the defeated candidates, who said: "I would rather be beaten by that Scotsman than by anyone else."

WILL REGISTER ALIENS; DRASTIC LAW ATTACKED

Lansing, Mich., June 6.—Governor Brucker's alien registration bill, passed by the legislature, Attorney General Voorhies contends that it is unconstitutional. The new law requires every person who lacks final citizenship papers to register. Those who can not prove legal entry are to be deported. Employment of persons who do not possess registration cards is made illegal.

Detroit, Mich., June 6.—Federal Judge O'Brien has restrained the State of Michigan from enforcing the registration-of-aliens act. A hearing will be held on the order.

Counsel for a complaining alien argued that the act attempts to deal with a subject exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government.

TEACHERS JOIN UNION TO CHECK WAGE CUTS

Chicago, June 6.—The American Federation of Teachers, an A. F. of L. affiliate, chartered 15 new locals this year and increased its membership 26 per cent, according to Florence Curtis Hanson, secretary-treasurer of that organization.

"Threatened salary cuts by direct reduction, through suspension of salary schedules, by increase of teacher load, are arousing the teachers to a realization of the need of effective organization," said the trade union official.

DEFEAT CAR-LIMIT BILL

Springfield, Ill., June 6.—The House sidetracked the car-limit bill which would make it illegal for any railroad in this State to operate a train of more than 70 cars. Railroad workers urged the bill as a safety measure.

Mine Industry Can't Be Revived If Owners Hold Present Policy

New York, June 6.—The economic problem of the coal industry can not be dealt with effectively until miners and operators are so organized as to be able to function together in consideration of their joint interests.

This is the conclusion of the industrial relations committee of the Russell Sage Foundation after an examination of agreements between miners and operators' organizations during the last 30 years.

The investigation was confined to the Central Competitive Field, which includes Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. This field has been the basis for agreements in other areas. The Central Competitive Field operators, for four decades, maintained relations with the United Mine Workers until a few years ago, when they smashed the Jacksonville wage agreement and forced a nation-wide strike. The men were defeated. The industry, since then, has been in a chaotic state.

The report of this study, a book of 400 pages entitled "Labor Agreements in Coal Mines," makes this observation: "So long as a large part of the coal industry remains disorganized on human relations, there can be but little co-operation in the elimination of waste and conservation of coal.

"Compliance with contract is the general rule," the report states.

"It is true that strikes in violation of the agreement have occurred in all districts of the Central Competitive Field, but under management which men would have avoided these strikes. Analysis of causes show such preventable conditions as unjust discharges, bad conditions of wash houses, bad air in the mine, imperfect scales, alleged discrimination in hiring, unfair imposition of fines and absence of enough railroad cars so that the miners thought it not worth while to go down into the mines."

NO BIG COLLEGE GIFT WITHOUT STRINGS

Madison, Wis., June 6.—"Not $1 has ever been voluntarily or unconditionally offered by any incorporated educational foundation to any school in the United States," said Daniel H. Grady, former regent of the University of Wisconsin, in a luncheon address in this city.

The speaker defended the Board of Regents on which he served when it refused to accept corporate foundation gifts.

Explaining that he has no objection to voluntary gifts of individuals to the university, Mr. Grady said:

"By-laws of these foundations explicitly state that applicants for funds must give a specific showing of financial needs. That is the reason which newspapers that attack the university's policy on gifts has not made public. It places the State in the position of admitting itself incapable or unwilling to support its university."

Mr. Grady declared that corporate foundations not only necessitate a State begging for funds, but inevitably they demand that credit due to the work of the State institution be transferred to the endowment which provided the funds for research.

"Only one quarter of the States in the Union have signed on the dotted line, admitting themselves unable to support their own educational institutions," the speaker said.

"Minnesota has accepted an endowment for a medical school, has refused the last million. Not a medical school which has received foundation funds but has felt the influence.

"Public educational institutions and private institutions should work on the basis of competition. The work of privately endowed institutions has been excellent, but the work of the State should belong to the State."

LEATHER WORKERS OUT; FIGHT WAGE REDUCTION

New York, June 6.—Nearly 3,000 pocketbook workers struck against a 25 per cent wage cut. These workers are affiliated to the International Union of United Leather Workers.

They also struck last week, unemployment insurance and abandonment by the employers of their proposal for a 10 per cent reorganization of shops every six months and the introduction of two apprentices for each mechanic. One apprentice for each mechanic is now the rule. Under the old agreement discharge was prohibited except for good cause.

The 10 per cent reorganization scheme would permit employers to discharge that percentage of workers every six months.

STATE CAN'T REGULATE PRIVATE AUTO TRUCK

Washington, June 6.—Florida's statute to regulate motor transport has been set aside by the United States Supreme Court. The appellant was found guilty of violating the law, when he operated his truck for a grocery store in Duvall County.

Chief Justice Hughes, in voiding the statute, pointed out that it makes no distinction between common carriers and a private carrier, both of whom must file an application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity.

The court drew a sharp distinction between a common carrier and the owner of an individual truck.

WAGE BILL PASSED

Springfield, Ill., June 6.—Both branches of the legislature passed a bill which makes it a misdemeanor to wilfully and wrongfully refuse to pay wages. The State Department of Labor will enforce the act.